



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.  
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986

# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**September 22, 2008**

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### **Attorney General McGraw Issues Subpoenas In Gasoline Price Gouging Investigation**

After receiving more than 200 telephone calls from people complaining of unreasonable gasoline price hikes, Attorney General Darrell McGraw issued investigative subpoenas seeking invoices and information from retailers to determine whether such price hikes were unlawful.

High prices have been reported by citizens throughout the state of West Virginia. Preliminary price information shows prices as low as \$3.79 per gallon in the Morgantown area and as high as \$4.15 per gallon in the Oceana area.

"Price gouging will not be tolerated. Greed motivated profiteers who prey upon people who can least afford it will be held accountable for breaking the law," said Attorney General McGraw.

With the declaration of a state of emergency in West Virginia, West Virginia's price gouging law was triggered, permitting the Attorney General's office to launch the investigation. Under the price gouging law, a gasoline station is permitted to hike its prices 10% above what the price at the pump was ten days before the declaration of the emergency. The price gouging law allows the seller to maintain his normal profit margin however, so if his costs increase from the distributor, his selling price can exceed the 10% cap.

The state of emergency is effective for thirty days and will end October 12, 2008, unless it is extended.

If you have information with regard to price gouging, please contact the Attorney General's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-368-8808.

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